

Minutes
STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING
9:00 a.m. Tuesday, October 9, 2007
Government Center South
Conference Room 19
402 West Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Attendance

SSCB Members

Bob Eddleman
Larry Clemens
Bill Mann
Jim Cherry
Nola Gentry
Gary Conant

Audience

Kelly Gentry, ISDA
Deb Fairhurst, ISDA
Tammy Lawson, ISDA
Deb Abbott, ISDA
Amy Eizinger, ISDA
Beth Bechdol, ISDA
Jim Droege, IASWCD
Jane Hardisty, NRCS
Robert Woodling, Monroe Co. SWCD
Jennifer Boyle, IASWCD

9:05 AM: Call to Order

Bob Eddleman welcomed everyone to the October 9, 2007 SSCB meeting.

Draft Minutes of August 2007

Bill Mann wanted to clarify the increase in training grant as a minimum \$750 for supervisors and a max \$750 for staff.

Mann moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Nola Gentry seconded and the motion carried.

Leadership Development

Supervisor Resignations/Appointments – Kelly Gentry

Kelly Gentry presented the request of supervisor appointment from Franklin SWCD. Franklin requests the supervisor appointment of John J. Selm due to the death of Norman C. Klusman.

N. Gentry moved to approve the request of recommendation for supervisor appointment for Franklin SWCD. Gary Conant seconded and the motion carried.

District Request and CWI Request– Bob Eddleman <http://www.in.gov/isda/2726.htm>

Ohio County Disaster Relief Request– See link.

Discussion followed on not singling out one county. Beth Bechdol mentioned that she was to meet with FSA in the afternoon to discuss disaster relief.

Jim Cherry made a motion to table the Ohio County request until the next SSCB meeting. Conant seconded and motion carried.

Brown County CWI Grant Alteration Request – See link

Monroe County SWCD supervisors did not meet last week to discuss this issue. N. Gentry believed this to be a reasonable request and suggested getting Monroe County on board as soon as their supervisors could meet. N. Gentry suggested once Brown and Monroe have met that a letter be submitted to the board. Cherry agreed.

Gentry made a motion to accept the Brown County request. Cherry seconded and motion carried.

Ohio County CWI Grant Extension Request – See Link

Amy Eizinger mentioned a new contract would need to be drafted in order to transfer funds since they are from two different years. N. Gentry suggested leaving the money in the soil testing grant or let the funds revert back. Eddleman thought the creation of a new contract would be burdensome and that precedence had been set in previous requests.

Gentry made a motion to deny the Ohio County request. Cherry seconded and motion carried.

Sullivan County CWI Extension Request – See Link

Gentry made a motion to accept the Sullivan County request. Conant seconded and motion carried.

Jackson County, Don Morgan Letter– See Link

Eddleman mentioned that this is not a request just a letter of concern. Tammy Lawson also received a letter and had spoken to Mr. Morgan. She suggested that he speak with Mr. Lawrence and if necessary to contact Mr. Braun with IDEM. She supplied him with the contact information of both individuals.

ISDA Report – Beth Bechdol

Bechdol opened with ISDA thanking the Board, the DSC staff and the ICP stakeholders for all the efforts over the past months to engage the conservation family in these important discussions and for all the ideas, comments and thoughts that have been offered. She briefly mentioned the national discussions around conservation and her anticipation that Indiana will want to be proactive to capture new opportunities.

Bechdol then mentioned two issues that ISDA is working on concerning the CWI funding and 2008 budget. Recently ISDA was informed that the account control code would be changed for the CWI account making the account reverting. This adjustment by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is consistent with their work to support the Governor's initiative for fiscal responsibility. These types of changes have occurred throughout other agencies and fund centers in an effort to coordinate funds with statutory language. The 2007 CWI obligations are covered, and the 2008 allocation is still available. However, Beth pointed out that a yearly reverting account (where leftover money must be turned in at the end of each fiscal year) will not work with multi-year conservation programs. This challenge is well understood and ISDA is committed to continuing to work with OMB.

The second issue involved revenue fluctuations in the Cigarette Tax Fund (CTF). With the increase in the tax to accommodate a new health care program in Indiana, the revenue allocated

to the CTF is anticipated to decrease over the next two years. It will be imperative for ISDA and other departments dependent on this revenue to practice fiscal responsibility in order to respond appropriately to this challenge. Indiana conservation stakeholders will want to be proactive in looking for new ways to fund conservation needs and ISDA will be committed in assisting in this effort.

Bechdol also commented on the new \$500,000 (general fund) allocation to CWI. Since there has been a delay in submitting a spending plan to OMB, to accommodate the public input sessions, OMB has offered specific expectations for the purpose of the new funding. Director Andy Miller, ISDA, will be meeting with OMB to present the draft CWI budget approved by the SSCB along with explanations of the plans for the \$500,000. Once OMB has approved the budget ISDA anticipates that the funding will be made available to accommodate the SSCB plans.

Partnership Comments

Much discussion followed along with several questions. The comments and questions centered on the criteria for a reverting fund compared to a non-reverting fund, on budgeting and how this new account will work, on the dynamics of administering CREP and other leveraging programs, on how the SSCB can make plans with confidence concerning the new legislation that might be needed and, finally, on how stakeholders can assist the SSCB in adjusting the statute to reinstate the non-reverting status of CWI. At the end of the discussion, N. Gentry suggested monitoring the issue and letting ISDA and the SSCB handle the issues administratively for now until more is known. All present agreed with this concept by consensus.

5 MINUTE BREAK

10:30 a.m. Eddleman called the meeting back to order.

SSCB Chairman's Report-Bob Eddleman

CWI Funding & Next Steps

PowerPoint Presentation – Tammy Lawson and Deb Fairhurst

See Attachment

The presentation was given by Deb Fairhurst and Tammy Lawson that highlighted general information concerning the environmental impacts of water quality and the information that had been gathered from considering SWCD business plans, State Technical Committee discussions and other sources of input. The CREP and CWI Grant reports were inserted into the presentation to supplement the information for the SSCB.

CREP Report – Kelly Gentry-See Attachment

Much discussion took place between board members and other attendees about the opportunities with CREP and other USDA programs. The board tabled the discussion to continue with the presentation and to learn more information from the CWI grants report.

CWI Grants Report-Amy Eizinger-See Attachment

Much discussion followed the CWI Report as board members and the attendees gave general thoughts about the grants program. The comments focused in three areas. The first was how we can utilize funding to complement CREP. The second area of comments seemed concerned with offering SWCDs more opportunities to compete for grants and to improve the application process. The third area centered on the need for a broad environmental objective that all stakeholders could support and work on such as nutrient and sediment discharges.

Clemens made a motion that nutrient and sediment management issues should be the focus areas. Mann seconded. Discussion followed and motion carried.

Gentry stated one way to help these issues to expand our commitment to CREP.

Gentry made a motion to expand our commitment on CREP in a way that will have the greatest impact to help address the issues of sediment and nutrient. Larry seconded.

Discussion followed on new CREP vs. amended CREP. New CREP means more acres are added. Cherry suggested new CREP would be in the best interest. Lawson explained that we have to wait on a new Farm Bill before we can decide on a new CREP. Current opportunities are available through amending the current CREP.

Motioned carried.

Discussion followed regarding budgetary issues and guidelines.

Eddleman suggested setting aside \$350,000 for CWI Grants and \$200,000 for CREP support.

Lawson mentioned the Executive Committee could meet and decide on the details and guidelines at a later date.

Gentry made a motion to set aside \$350,000 for the 2008 CWI Grants and \$200,000 for the 2008 Conservation Program Support. Executive Committee will decide on the details for Conservation Program Support at a later date once Director Miller meets with OMB. The CWI Grants Committee will decide on the details of the grants program. Conant seconded and motion carried.

ISDA-Tammy Lawson-No other reports

DNR Report – No report

IDEM Report – No report

Purdue Report – No report

IASWCD Report – Jim Droege – See Attachment

NRCS Report – Jane Hardisty – See Attachment

Hardisty also mentioned the USDA office consolidation. Nine locations are considering consolidation.

Farm Service Agency Report – No report**SWCD Foundation Report – No report****Leadership Development Workgroup Update – Nola Gentry**

Gentry mentioned she met with Lawson and e-mailed the rest of the SSCB about the leadership institute. Cris Goode will be assigned to the Leadership Institute along with the support of the DSS Team and their regional SWCD groups. Overall the evaluation of the past pilots was very good and a statewide implementation will be planned and announced over the next two months. The ICP Leadership Work Group will meet periodically to offer guidance and overall vision for the program.

Delivery System:

Delivery System Workgroup Update – No report

Funding:

Funding Workgroup Update – No report

Accountability:

Accountability Workgroup Update – No report

Technology:

Technology Workgroup Update – No report

Outreach:

Outreach Workgroup Update – No report

Public Comment

Eddleman also mentioned the upcoming NACD meeting. One SSCB member needs to be present. It is in Reno next February. The opportunity is open if someone from the SSCB would like to go.

Next meeting: December 11, 2007 at 9:00 AM, location TBD

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM